

Bluffview Montessori Board of Directors Meeting Minutes- February 17, 2021

BMS Board Members Present- Erich Lippman, Shelly Merchlewitz, Ann-Marie Dunbar, Katie Kinneberg, Meghan Booth, Henry Schantzen, Molly Leifeld, Dan Kirk

Non-board Members Present- Sherry Lohmeyer (Zoom); Michelle Hoffman (CLA-Zoom); Brenda Kes (Zoom)

Members Absent-

1- Meeting was called to order at 5:59 PM.

2- Katie motioned and Molly seconded to approve the agenda for February 17, 2021.

3- Katie motioned and Molly seconded to approve the minutes for January 20, 2021.

-Katie motioned and Shelly seconded to approve the minutes for February 9, 2021.

Old Business

New Business

4- Open Forum: Nothing.

5- Audit Presentation: CLA is issuing a “clean” or “unmodified” opinion on our FY2020 financial statements. Michelle highlighted our stable enrollment over the last 5 years. Because of the lack of funding for state pension plans, we have a \$2.3M liability, but this is common across schools that have to participate in the state pension plan. The unassigned fund balance was 33.4%, which is very strong (they recommend around 25%). Revenues and expenditures were within .5% of the budget. Overall, FY2020 went well despite the COVID shutdown.

6- January Financials: Fund balance reflects a strong financial position at the end of January, 2021. We are currently at 219 pupil units, while there were 227 at the time that the budgeting occurred. However, CARES funds have helped offset loss of revenues from declining enrollment. Most of our shifting from general fund is due to slightly lower enrollment in the pre-K program.

7- Consent Agenda

AHOS: Need to recruit a little bit in Kindergarten, 4th, and 5th grade. Erdkinder looks large--45. 99% intend to return. Distance learning is going well. A few students have opted for distance learning in the case of this return to class. There has been no indication by E2 students suggesting a need for distance learning. Hiring has proceeded at a fever pitch. We have amended food program to extend through the end of April. The lack of refrigerated trucks has

ironically led to food being lost because it froze in the truck. MCAs are on. We will begin on March 22.

HOS: \$75-80K will be coming as federal aid--GEAR and ESSR. Testing is helping identify asymptomatic adults. About $\frac{2}{3}$ of staff has gotten their first vaccine shot, about five have already gotten their second. People are considered immune 2 weeks after the second shot. Immunity lasts 90 days. Authorizer (VOA) relationship is proceeding apace and seems to be ideal. We are considering summer programming to support kindergarten and 1st grade students who have been most adversely affected by the COVID closures. We are adding another person in the kitchen for support. We will send out a letter to families asking for voluntary quarantines over spring break. Staff will be approached the same way, although we would be able to require staff quarantines legally. How can we bolster the paraprofessional position to make it more appealing in order to reduce turnover? Henry suggests a transition to having a trained HR person. Henry is exploring health insurance options in order to make employment more appealing. It has traditionally been our biggest barrier to hiring. We have had good luck and good effort with keeping the COVID numbers down here. Boilers have been replaced for \$36,000.

8- Fastbridge Data: Almost all of the fastbridge testing is done. Kids are still doing well in math and reading. Early math and early reading are not doing as well. Special intervention will be starting up with some first graders in order to get them up. Students from second through eighth grade are doing quite nicely, though. This inspires further discussion about the possibility of summer work to bring some students up to speed.

9- Governance Committee: Two board positions are up--1 parent, 1 teacher.

10- Letter of Resignation: Petersen, A. Katie motions and Meghan seconds approval of A Petersen's letter of resignation. Unanimous approval.

11- Letters of Employment: Katie motioned to approve all letters of employment (Beckmann, Young, Prigge, Porter, Windmiller) and Shelly seconded. Unanimous approval.

12- Stipends: Katie motioned to approve stipend for Esther Hill. Molly seconded. Unanimous approval. Katie motioned to approve stipend for Sherry Lohmeyer. Molly seconded. Unanimous approval.

13- Annual Cycle of Review: Henry highlighted some points to think about regarding MN non-profit law-statute 317. Meghan walked us through the Valorization of the Personality concept in Montessori. Represents a sort of end goal of Montessori education and thus culminates in Erdkinder. Transition from "I can do it myself" (CH) to "I can think for myself" (Erd). Role of a guide is to teach them to interact with these ideas and each other in productive ways.

14- COVID/Learning Model Update: Everyone has been training for E2 to return. Staff is showing up and everything is firing on all cylinders at this point. There are really no changes to our current plans and no need for discussions.

15- Additional New Business: None.

16- Adjournment: 8:02 PM.